



PRESS RELEASE

NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE

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NASS to Study Washington's Top Value of Production Crop

Olympia, Washington – How are Apple growers being affected by escalating fuel and fertilizer costs? What new production practices are they using to assure a healthy environment and an abundant crop? These and other important questions will be answered when the U.S. Department of Agriculture conducts Phase II of the 2007 Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS).

From October to December, NASS will conduct personal interviews with 525 Washington farm operators. They will be asked to provide information on their fertilizer, nutrient and pesticide applications, irrigation, as well as their pest management practices.

“This is the second phase of ARMS, where we focus on production practices. This year, we are looking at Apples and Certified Organic Apples,” said Chris Messer, Director of the Washington Field Office of USDA’s National Agricultural Statistics Service, (NASS).

While ARMS is a complex survey, its importance cannot be underestimated, according to Messer. “Virtually every federal farm program and policy relies heavily on ARMS data,” she said. “Conservation programs, price support programs, risk management programs, research programs - all utilize ARMS data generated through this survey. That’s why it’s so important that farmers take the time to participate and ensure that we have the most accurate and up-to-date information, straight from the source.”

Messer assures ARMS participants that the confidentiality of their responses is protected by law. “NASS strictly safeguards the privacy of all respondents and publishes only state-and national-level data, ensuring that no individual producer or operation can be identified,” she said.

For more information about ARMS and other surveys conducted by NASS, contact the Washington Field Office at (800) 435-5883 or visit the NASS web site at: www.nass.usda.gov

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